



MOTORCYCLE SAFETY



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Motorcycle Traffic to Increase for Sturgis® Rally *South Dakota event celebrates 75th Anniversary August 3-9*

BISMARCK, N.D. – Motorcycles are a common sight during summer months, but the number of riders, and especially groups of riders, is expected to increase during travel to the popular motorcycle rally in the Black Hills of South Dakota in early August. Motorists and riders need to be alert and patient while sharing the road, according to ABATE (American Bikers Aiming Toward Education), the lead organization for the North Dakota motorcycle community, and the NDDOT (North Dakota Department of Transportation).

“The situation is potentially dangerous for everyone when large groups of motorcycles are on the road,” said Lonnie Bertsch, executive director for ABATE. “Nationally, eight out of ten motorcycle crashes result in injury or death,” Bertsch said.

The standard routes for bikers heading to Sturgis through North Dakota tend to be highways and Interstates, but motorcyclists are also known to take scenic byways. Two-lane highways are often the preferred routes for riders, according to Bertsch. He offers tips for motorists who encounter groups of riders and want to pass safely.

“The recommendation, when passing groups of ten or fewer riders, is to try and pass them all at once,” said Bertsch. “Be patient and wait for the time when you can safely pass. Use your turn signal and carefully enter the passing lane to go by.”

“For their part, riders in groups should position themselves to enable safe passing maneuvers. The important things for both riders and drivers are to always signal your intent and be considerate of the other vehicle,” said Bertsch.

The Motorist Code for sharing the road with motorcycles:

- Always signal, check mirrors and check blind spots
- Don’t try to squeeze in between motorcyclists traveling in a group; give them a chance to create an opening or wait until you can pass all of them
- Be patient and alert – take an extra moment after a larger vehicle passes before beginning to turn



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- Keep at least a 3- to 4-second following distance from a motorcycle
- Vehicle drivers should be careful not to kick up debris or gravel or spray washer fluid
- Allow a motorcycle the full width of the lane; don't encroach on the rider's lane

The Rider Code for sharing the road with motorists:

- Stand out. Ensure that all drivers will see you
- Always look twice before turning into traffic
- Anticipate hazards that you may encounter
- Use turn signals
- Be aware of riding in blind spots
- Be vigilant when changing lanes

ABATE's mission is to promote motorcycle safety and awareness to the motorcycle riding community in North Dakota. While the NDDOT's mission is to safely move people and goods. ABATE and the NDDOT work together to promote rider training classes through the North Dakota Motorcycle Safety Program.

Learn more about public awareness for motorcycle safety at <http://www.ndcodefortheroad.org/heads-up/>

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